

Dear parent/carer,

This provides a further update on home testing, contact tracing and isolation periods.

We have now completed all the Lateral Flow testing in school and students have been given their first set of home test kits. During the week beginning 29th March we will be distributing the next batch, as your child should also **continue testing twice a week, at home, throughout the Easter school holidays.**

Update on testing

The advice from Public Health has now changed in relation to testing and they have now informed us that **lateral flow tests should be carried out 3-4 days apart** rather than 3-5.

If a student tests positive with a home lateral flow test **they must follow this up with a PCR test to confirm the result** available through [Get a free PCR test to check if you have coronavirus - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) or by calling 119 if you have no internet access. The home tests should only be carried out if your child has no symptoms of coronavirus. If they are experiencing symptoms that could be coronavirus then a PCR test should be booked in the first instance because these tests are more reliable.

Update on contact tracing

We have been informed by Public Health that we must trace the contacts of students who test positive based on a lateral flow home test and must not wait for the results of a PCR test for confirmation. This means that we may be in a situation where your child is named as a contact of another student, told to isolate and stay at home, but if their contact subsequently receives a negative PCR test, they will be recalled to school, perhaps within a very short time frame of 1-2 days.

This may be the source of some frustration in times to come, and the disruption to you and your child's ability to attend school is regrettable. However, continued testing and contact tracing are such important measures in reducing transmission of the virus and we must follow the advice given to us by Public Health England.

In order to try and minimise the disruption to your child's education and further transmission of the virus, we would like your help with the following;

- **Testing** – by testing **every Sunday and Thursday evening or Monday and Friday morning** the need to contact trace will be reduced. If your child tested positive on a Sunday/Monday we would not need to contact trace. Since these tests are for those who **do not have any symptoms** this is not putting others at any increased risk.
- **PCR confirmation tests**- if your child tests positive with a Lateral flow test at home please **book a PCR test as soon as possible and preferably not by post.** Postal tests can take several days to arrive. A proportion of the positive Lateral flow tests will likely return a

negative PCR test, therefore a quick turn around with this will allow us to recall students to school quickly.

Reminder about Reporting results and testing for parents, households and bubbles twice a week

It is really important that results of test are reported online straight away, even if your child's result is negative or void. It's easy to do at www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result.

Results can also be reported via telephone by calling 119 (free from mobiles and landlines). Lines are open every day, 7am to 11pm.

It is important to keep a note of your child's results and share that with us via the online form on the website.

Regular rapid testing is now also available for parents, their households and support or childcare bubbles. The government is encouraging all families to participate in twice weekly testing to help stop the spread.

Parents and other adults in the household can access tests by:

- Ordering tests online www.gov.uk/order-school-household-tests
- Getting an assisted test at work, if it is available
- Attending a test site to get tested (where you will be able to see how to take the test) or pick up tests to do at home.

To find out more on school household testing visit [Households and bubbles of pupils, students and staff of schools and colleges: get rapid lateral flow tests - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/households-and-bubbles-of-pupils-students-and-staff-of-schools-and-colleges-get-rapid-lateral-flow-tests)

We continue to encourage everyone to take part in regular Covid-19 testing and follow the national guidelines on isolating.